

Guadalupe River Park



San José, California

Master Plan 2002

City of San José
San Jose Redevelopment Agency
Santa Clara Valley Water District
United States Army Corps of Engineers

*“All great cities have at least one great park.
The Guadalupe will be that great park”*

*Frank Fiscalini
Former Vice Mayor & Council Member
Chair of the Guadalupe River Park Task Force*



INTRODUCTION	1
VISION	3
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
Urban Setting, Natural Environment	6
Monitoring the Water’s Flow	6
People Flow	6
Park Open Spaces	7
The Way Forward	7
PROJECT SETTING	9
The Region	9
Project Site	9
River Environment	9
MASTER PLAN	13
Master Plan Philosophy	13
Flood-Control Measures	14
The Urban Framework	15
Gems in the Necklace	19
Maintaining the Vision	31
APPENDIX A	33
PROJECT HISTORY	34
200 Years of Flooding	34
Flood Control or Park?	35
Creative Responses to a Unique Idea	36
A History of Collaboration	38
Community Involvement	38
GLOSSARY OF TERMS	39
CREDITS	40



This is a story about the renaissance of a river. Not a river in the wild, but a river that meanders through the heart of a very large city. A river that attracted Native American and European settlers to its edge because it teemed with fish and other food sources, but drove them back with the force of its floods. A river that, in the 1930s and 40s, children swam in after school. A river that, by the 1950s and 60s, was edged by both quaint residences and by industrial buildings crowded up against its banks, draining their waste into its waters. A river that, by the late 1960s, was all but forgotten, strewn with shopping carts and anything but attractive.

That river, the Guadalupe, today looks quite different again. Much of its banks are filled with vegetation that provides habitat for wildlife and forms a verdant buffer between the downtown and the water. From Highway 880 to Highway 280 it has become a park where commuters walk and ride their bicycles; where children squeal as they run and climb and swing in playgrounds; where people sit under beautiful old trees and watch the river wander by or learn something new about its history and the history of the city.

Today the Guadalupe River is truly the heart of San José, linking various corners of the downtown and connecting the city to the

region through a network of trails. The Guadalupe River Park hosts myriad activities and open spaces, from the Children’s Discovery Museum to Sister City Gardens to the River Walk. Fish have returned, breeding, migrating and spawning in the channel. Birds, mammals and amphibians find habitat in the vegetation along the river’s edge. And humans who enjoy the stimulation of urban life can also find moments for quiet reflection in the park’s plazas and gardens.

Underneath all these physical improvements is something much more mundane but equally critical to the downtown—facilities that protect the city from the river’s floods have been incorporated into the design of the Guadalupe River Park. Hidden underground or masked as open space, these measures represent an entirely unique approach to maintaining a natural river in a highly urban area.

The renaissance of the Guadalupe River has taken place over 30 years, a blink in the life of a river but almost half the life of a human. It represents a fundamental change in thinking about the role of the river in downtown, tremendous efforts on the part of the city and its residents, and the persistent pursuit of a vision. A vision not only of a better river, but of a better San José.

I have fond memories of the Guadalupe River as a young child. It was a great playground and an easy escape form city life. My sisters and I would play tag, hide and seek, lay in the grass and tell stories. We would wonder if my Grandfather Cesar and

his brothers and sisters played along a river in Mexico similar to the Guadalupe. We could imagine them playing much like ourselves. The river represented “life” as it brought nourishment to the crops, food and work for the families much like the

Guadalupe River was for the Ohlone Indians and later for the agriculture industry that made this “The Valley of Hearts Delight”.

I am excited and pleased to see the rebirth of the river area. Now a source for relaxation and entertainment for the

active city on its banks. My Grandfather would be proud to see the river being used for the enjoyment of all. There is life again in the river.

Teresa Chavez Delgado,
Grandaughter of Cesar Chavez



The vision that brought the Guadalupe River from neglected afterthought to the heart of downtown recognized that most great cities in the world sit next to a body of water and celebrate it in some way. And while many of the rivers that flow through cities have concrete or stone-lined banks, the people behind this vision saw an opportunity to preserve and celebrate the natural character of the Guadalupe River as it meanders through San José. Early planners realized that such an amenity would be an integral part of a beautiful downtown that attracts people and business.

Yet protection from the Guadalupe's sometimes devastating floods has never been far from people's minds. The river's repeated bank-topping over the centuries has shown that implementing measures that would minimize or eliminate damage from flood events was critical to the continued growth of the city.

In contrast to the metal-and-concrete nature of flood-control measures, a serene, natural environment in the midst of urban bustle was the core vision for the Guadalupe River Park. Layered onto that vision was the creation of a focal point for the city, a center of activity full of amenities, a place for education. Testament to the strength of the vision for the Guadalupe River Park is the fact that

major flood-control facilities and a beautiful regional park could be combined so successfully and subtly.

Rather than serving particular neighborhoods or special interests, the Guadalupe River Park was envisioned as a regional resource. It is a place for people of all ages to enjoy a variety of activities in different open spaces along the river, from the smallest plaza to the largest meadow. Recognizing that open space is in short supply in cities and generally has fewer advocates than development does, the vision for the park focused on providing open space that would be maintained for passive uses—walking, bicycling, playing, contemplating nature, educational pursuits, and similar activities.

This vision has now become a reality. The Guadalupe River Park draws young and old to the river's banks, offering a respite from the hectic life of the city. Educational elements exist throughout the park, and commuters use it as a pleasant alternative to cars and traffic. Everyone has their favorite spot. The park will continue to grow and change, but the vision that brought it to this point will remain: it will continue to be a natural heart for San José, providing a range of passive activities and offering habitat for wildlife. And it will be an integral component to the making of a great city.

River Park Towers is the first major project by a private developer that was designed as a natural extension of the Guadalupe River Park. Access to the main lobby is past a waterfall type fountain and across a plaza that connects directly to the River Park.

Here, people relax while they enjoy the River Park's natural beauty. Or, they can embark on a trail; either for exercise, to bird watch or enroute to a business appointment. The plaza is a place where walkers can rest and listen to the relaxing sounds of cascading water, or

cross a bridge over the river towards the central business district.

As an architect involved with downtown San José redevelopment and the Guadalupe River Park project for over thirty years, I believe River Park Towers is an excellent

example of the major benefits private developers gain as their projects provide further enhancement to the Guadalupe River Park, neither of which can be achieved without the other.

Stan Gould, Task Force Member



The heart of downtown San José is not a single monument or plaza, but a soft green ribbon winding among the buildings and streets of a dense urban center. That ribbon, the Guadalupe River, gives San José a character unique among the largest cities in the United States. Next to corporate headquarters, commercial and office space, civic buildings, busy intersections and freeways, the river calmly passes through town, its green banks providing a natural setting that allows wildlife to co-exist with city life.

Between Highways 880 and 280, the Guadalupe River also hums with human activity. Following the flow of the river, pathways and plazas host strolling families, commuters on foot or on bicycle, playing children, and individuals seeking a few quiet moments near the water. Yet the Guadalupe River Park is more than a downtown open space. It is a unique combination of a tranquil, beautiful park and flood-control measures that effectively mollify the river's devastating flood potential in check.

The Guadalupe has not always been a peaceful neighbor to the downtown. Tremendous floods have caused damage to both property and the public's opinion of the river. As a result, flood-control projects have been implemented over the past several

decades that feature varying levels of concrete and piping, sometimes blending into the natural surroundings, sometimes standing in sharp contrast.

With insight and persistence, citizens of San José, the City, the San Jose Redevelopment Agency, the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) have slowly reconciled traditional flood-control planning with the dream of a nature-filled park downtown. The Guadalupe River Park Master Plan is unique in the way it carefully weaves the river's natural and cultural amenities together with the flood protection needed to keep its frequent high flows from causing damage to the city. It represents a balance of flood control measures and river restoration, human recreation and wildlife habitat, park development and aesthetics.

This document reflects all the work done since the 1960s to bring the Guadalupe River Park to fruition, outlining the numerous public spaces and flood control facilities along the 2.6 miles of river that run through downtown. Most of the open spaces discussed here have been built at the time of publication; the remainder will be completed in the following few years.

The Guadalupe River is a secluded, quiet sanctuary for children as well as adults to interact with nature; see a California King snake, view swimming turtles, feel a live crawfish and hear a wide variety of birds amid a large canopy of trees. The past and present

come alive with the story of the river's critical role in supplying water and food to Native Americans, Santa Clara Mission, and those who grew crops and brought prosperity to the region. There is yet another tale of the river and that is the saga of seasonal rains

ravaging nearby homes and businesses every few years which we must remember, respect and share with future generations.

Today people can celebrate and congregate along this unique river and enjoy a wide variety of activities

that will define our community.

Virginia Holtz, Task Force Member

Urban Setting, Natural Environment

Located in the heart of the San Francisco Bay Area’s largest city, the Guadalupe River can rightly be called an oasis to its highly urbanized surroundings. Almost completely surrounded by urbanization, it still offers habitat for a variety of plants and animals.

Trees, shrubs and ground cover lining the banks of the river form a vital band of green along its length. This riparian vegetation thrives in the moist soils next to the river, even with San José’s relatively dry climate. Mammals, birds and amphibians settle in this welcoming atmosphere, and the waters of the river are home and highway to a variety of resident and migrating fish.

Monitoring the Water’s Flow

Between Highway 880 and Grant Street (see map on page 13) just south of Highway 280, a number of flood-control measures and streambed improvements have been implemented. The streambed improvements, which are primarily focused on providing passage for fish in times of low river levels and maintaining cool water temperatures are comprised of small dams and low-flow channels.

Protection from a 100-year flood event is achieved through a variety of facilities in this stretch of river. Between Highway 880 and Coleman Avenue, wide terraces and a secondary channel accommodate high flows. From Coleman Avenue to Santa Clara Street, a 17 feet deep by 64 feet wide bypass diverts waters away from the main channel during flood events, a design that has allowed the vegetative cover along the river to remain intact. The remainder of the stretch, to just south of Highway 280, includes concrete stairs and walls, bank reinforcement, and another bypass between Park Avenue and Woz Way.



People Flow

The Guadalupe River Park and its trail system are oriented north-south. Access to and across the Guadalupe River is critical to bringing the east and west sides of the river together, and, for pedestrians and cyclists, is also an important component of the non-motorized vehicles alternative allowed by the Guadalupe River Park. Pedestrians have access to the river via public sidewalks and pathways through private development, and have several options for crossing the river using the many pedestrian and vehicular bridges.

Once at the river, the network of paths called the River Walk takes pedestrians and cyclists along the river and out to other local and regional trail systems. The River Walk’s convenience and serenity attract commuters who walk or bicycle to downtown instead of using other forms of transportation. The Guadalupe River Park is also easily accessed by public

transit, including buses and light rail, as well as by car, with public and private parking options readily available.

Park Open Spaces

While the length and beauty of the river is the framework for the park, myriad open spaces along its banks offer park users a variety of experiences.

Several overlooks provide the opportunity to watch the river’s waters during normal flow and high-flow events. Viewing areas at Woz Way, Park Avenue, Santa Clara Street, St. John Street and Coleman Avenue combine viewing prospects with educational information about floods and local culture.

Gardens give visitors the chance to sit quietly in a beautiful environment. The Sister City Gardens along the river feature plants, paving materials and monuments from other countries. At the north end of the park, the Guadalupe Gardens are being developed as acres of public gardens and passive open space.

Memorials and monuments along the river recall those who have lived on this land in the past, elements of the city’s history, the river’s flooding activity, or those who have made some contribution to the greater culture. The Veterans’ Memorial, an AIDS grove, tributes to Native Americans and to the area’s agricultural past, and markers symbolic of the power and fascination of water appear throughout the park.

In addition, there are several artistic and sculptural installations not celebrating just one person or cause. These include the Children’s Bridge, Parade of Animals sculptures and Monopoly in the Park, all at Discovery Meadow; the Center for Performing Arts pedestrian bridge, and the mosaic



signage features, which are the first step in a river-wide signage system.

Lastly, there are a number of open spaces, plazas, parks and play areas that allow people of all ages to enjoy sitting, talking, playing outdoors, or taking part in a festival along the river. These range from the large Discovery Meadow to the smaller McEnery Park, Arena Green, and the plazas at Confluence East.

The Way Forward

Bringing a significant amenity like the Guadalupe River Park to fruition requires extensive vision and planning, but it also needs ongoing support of that vision to remain the unique attraction that it is. Rigorous screening of future design proposals has to be met with continued high-quality maintenance. Public participation in the planning and development processes will help determine the route that the park takes, but there are a couple of elements of the vision that will carry through: the park is a regional resource primarily for passive recreation, and its natural qualities and wildlife habitat will be protected. Ultimately, the beauty of the park and the activities that it generates will create a center for the community that will be an integral element of San José’s identity and image.

“It shows that we can find compatible ways of designing flood-control solutions while preserving our environment.”

Virginia Holtz, Task Force Member

“Everyone really participated in the process of creating this park, and as a result it created common ownership.”

Antonio Estremera, Santa Clara Valley Water District Board Member

“We use the River Walk when we go downtown for city life, theater, restaurants, to listen to band music, and then we have a nice quiet ride home without having to drive anywhere.”

Larry Ames, Task Force Member

“One of the things we’re doing is saving some urban wilderness for everyone to enjoy.”

Joan Corsiglia, Task Force Member



Bringing a significant amenity like the Guadalupe River Park to fruition requires extensive vision and planning, but the vision also needs ongoing support so that the park can remain the unique attraction that it is. Rigorous screening of future design proposals has to be met with continued high-quality maintenance. Public participation in the planning and development processes will help determine the future of the park, but there are elements of the vision that are basic to the design and should be upheld: the park is a regional resource primarily for passive recreation, and its natural qualities and wildlife habitat will be protected. Ultimately, the beauty of the park and the activities that it generates will create a center for the community that will be an integral element of San José's identity and image.

The Region

The city of San José sits south of the San Francisco Bay, in the Santa Clara Valley. Surrounded by hills and mountains, it lies at the end of numerous creeks and rivers fed by tributaries originating in the foothills. Most of these waterways have been modified in some way or another to accommodate urban development.

Downtown San José is highly urbanized around the Guadalupe

River, with a mix of uses including commercial and office, light industrial, public facilities such as cultural centers and a sports arena, and residential areas ranging from single-family neighborhoods to high-density apartment and condominium developments.

Project Site

The Guadalupe River flows generally south to north, from the confluence of its tributaries in the Santa Cruz Mountains to the waters of the San Francisco Bay. The Guadalupe River Park lies in the downtown San José area, an oasis in the midst of the urban bustle. It has a variety of designed and natural spaces, from plazas to park-like strolling paths to natural riparian habitat, so visitors can choose between a kaleidoscope of river experiences or return to a favorite spot and the particular setting that it offers.

River Environment

Climate

As with much of California, the Santa Clara Valley has a mediterranean climate that features warm, dry summers and mild winters with moderate rainfall. In San José average rainfall is 14 inches, though the Guadalupe River's headwaters are in the Santa Cruz Mountains, where rainfall averages 50 inches per year.

The Guadalupe River basin is a wonderful place to ride my bike. I can avoid all the traffic and stop lights and it's great to ride through the diverse river environments. I ride along the open grass flood plains to the shaded tree lined paths along the river.

Having the bike path available is the main reason I commute to work via bicycle. Traffic and stop lights are stressful and the river path is quite relaxing and peaceful. It's a nice way to start and end each work day. I became aware of the other amenities

the Guadalupe River Park offers and now I find myself using the park on the weekends and evenings. I can't wait for more of the path ways to open and I hope more people find this relaxing alternative transportation route.
Laura Jump

Hydrology

What is called the Guadalupe River begins at the confluence of Guadalupe and Alamitos Creeks, near the intersection of Coleman Road and Almaden Expressway, in the southern part of San José. It flows north into San Francisco Bay, passing through the city center and draining into the bay at Alviso. Hydrology in the Guadalupe River basin has been greatly affected by human activity, including the construction of dams and reservoirs, the channelization of streams and rivers, and the building of levees for flood protection.

Vegetation

The vegetation along the Guadalupe River consists of a narrow band of riparian forest, whose width generally ranges from 100' to 200' in the Guadalupe River Park. This forest provides critical feeding and nesting habitat for wildlife, and is characterized by a tall tree canopy and lower layers of small trees, shrubs and ground covers.

A particular type of vegetative cover known as shaded riverine aquatic (SRA) habitat exists between a river and its adjacent riparian habitat. SRA consists of both overhead and in-stream cover, and plays a critical role in the health of waterways and the fish that inhabit them. It creates a place for fish to hide from predators, increases bank stability and habitat complexity, provides habitat for the insects on which stream fish feed, and provides shade to keep water temperatures down, a critical element in preserving the native fish habitat. Because the Guadalupe River is so narrow, overhead and in-stream cover extend across the entire river in many places.



“It’s wild in the middle and tame at the edges.”

Larry Ames, Task Force Member

“One of the greatest characteristics of the park is the subtle discoveries that are provided in such a large space. It’s a place to wander and wonder.”

Dennis Hickey, Task Force Member

Wildlife

The Guadalupe River supports a narrow array of wildlife that is tolerant of small home ranges, human activity, and urbanization. Mammals include raccoons, squirrels, opossums, feral cats, shrews, moles, and gophers. While few amphibians or reptiles survive along urban streams, species of frogs and toads can be found within the GRP boundaries. None of these species is listed as sensitive, threatened or endangered.

Because of their habitat needs and mode of travel, birds have been fairly successful in finding places to nest along the Guadalupe River, despite urbanization. Many species that have been sighted in the Guadalupe area are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Both native and non-native fish species populate the Guadalupe River. Anadromous fish (those that are born in freshwater, migrate to the ocean to mature, and return to freshwater to spawn) include Chinook salmon, steelhead/rainbow trout, and Pacific lamprey. These fish live primarily in the main reaches of the river, as dams and various channel structures block or restrict access to tributaries. The Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) continues to work on removing or modifying many of these fish barriers to enhance fish migration and habitat.

Protected fish species in the Guadalupe River, those that are not on the endangered species list but that do require protection so as not to make it onto the list, include Chinook salmon and steelhead. Chinook salmon migrate up the river and spawn in the fall. They spawn in and around the downtown San José area between October and December, with the eggs hatching after about two months and the young remaining in the gravel of the riverbed for several weeks before emerging as fry. Most juveniles migrate to the bay after a month or two.

“It integrates people with their environment, watching fish migrating upstream. One person saw a turtle swimming. It connects us to nature, and that’s a vibrant place for people to be.”

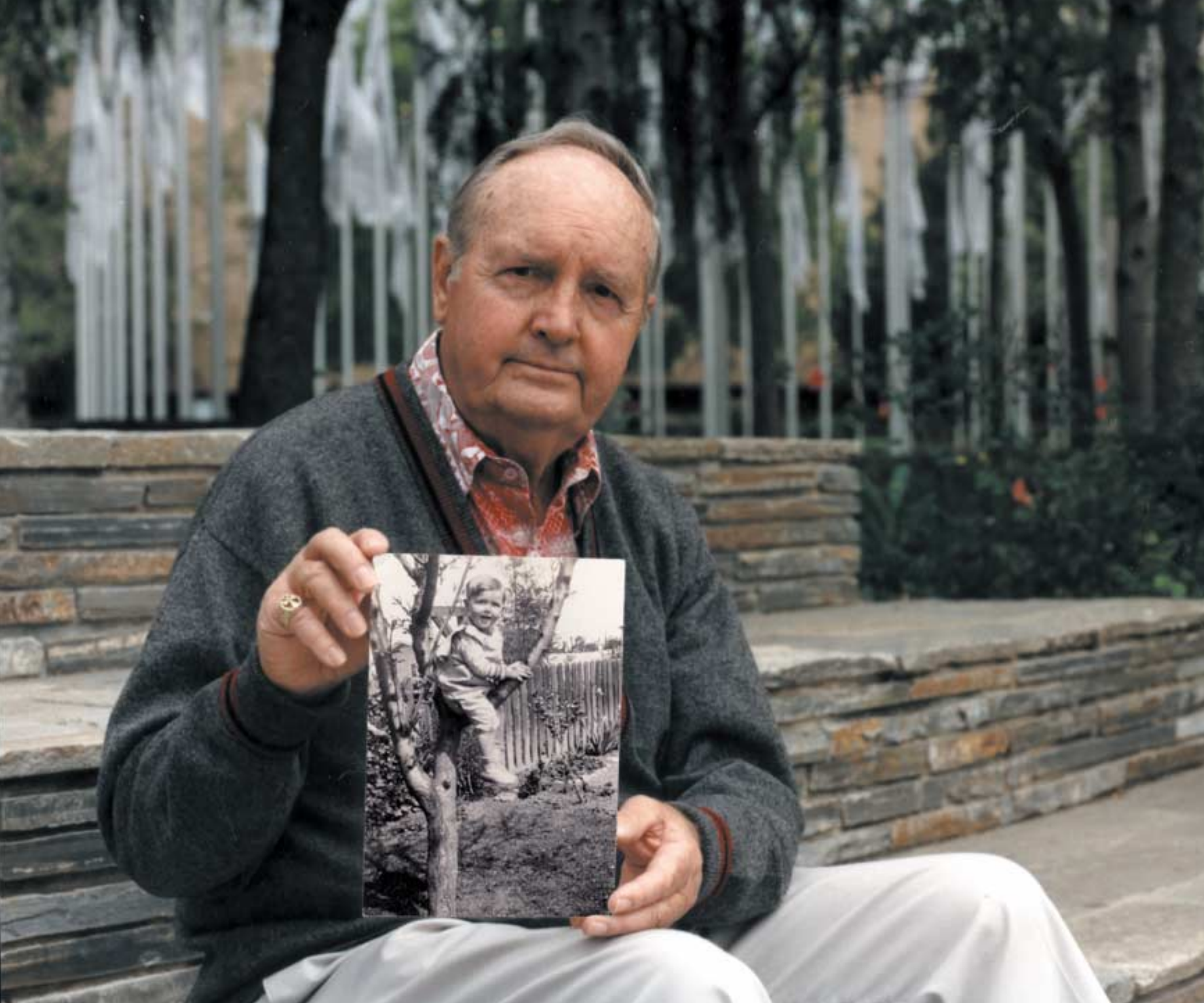
Virginia Holtz, Task Force Member



Steelhead migrate up the Guadalupe River from November through April and spawn between January and May. River temperatures keep the majority of spawning to the months before April, and eggs hatch between March and early June. Juvenile steelhead stay in the river for at least a year, migrating to the ocean between November and May.

“The Guadalupe River Park provides an amazing opportunity to bring the community to the heart of San Jose and enjoy a variety of activities or simply the solace and quiet of nature in the midst of a dense urban environment.”

Cindy Chavez, Council Member and Task Force Chair



The Guadalupe River Park represents a completely new way of thinking about how flood-control measures can be integrated into a beautiful park setting, but the city's vision of a revitalized downtown led to the development of an underground flood water bypass channel being overlaid with colorful open space in the form of parks, plazas, pathways and gardens. The result is a design that accommodates the waters of a 100-year flood event while providing the citizens of San José with a serene location for recreation, social events, and even commuting.

- The design of the flood-control, recreational, and habitat elements of this unique space reflects the following seven objectives:
- The provision of open space along the river for passive and active recreation in the urban environment
 - The enhancement of the Guadalupe River as both a valuable riparian habitat and a natural resource to be enjoyed by the greater San Jose community and visitors alike
 - The construction of a linear urban park that provides opportunities for park-enhanced development of private and public facilities
 - Protection from 100-year flood events
 - The creation of a safe, connected trail system that offers an alternative to motorized transportation
 - A balance between human access to the river and maximum protection of the riparian habitat
 - Citizen education about hydrology, flood control, and the natural habitat and cultural resources of the river

To maintain the native genetic pool in the Guadalupe River Park,

I grew up two blocks from the Guadalupe River. The river was our playground, because our elementary school (Abraham Lincoln) had a gravel and dirt playground. In the summer time we always had a couple of great swimming holes, and in the winter the

river was a source of driftwood that I could spear and bring home for our fireplace. Each winter my grandmother would remind me to tie my spear rope to a tree and not my leg. Later when I was elected mayor of San Jose I naturally supported the creation of a

special attention has been given to the plant materials used. The riparian vegetation of the river corridor is replaced or augmented only with genetic natives, while outside the river corridor, ornamentals have been chosen that are non-intrusive to genetic natives. This planting philosophy will continue with future expansion of the park.

An understanding of the uniqueness and scope of this project is impossible without examining the extensive infrastructure of the flood-control facilities, the urban framework around the river, and the individual open spaces that line the river and act as gems

in the park necklace. Most of these open spaces have been built as of the publication of this document; the remainder will be constructed in the following few years.



Location map of the Guadalupe River Park

beautiful urban river park for future generations.

Ron James, Former Mayor of San José

Flood-Control Measures

The entire length of the Guadalupe River Park, from Highway 880 to just south of Highway 280, has a variety of flood control measures, some above-ground, some below. The river’s edge between Highway 880 and Hedding Street is open and natural and includes gently sloped areas that accommodate high water flows. This overflow space includes a secondary river channel, riparian mitigation areas, and recreational trails. It also features reinforcement on the riverbanks and bottom. Small dams and a low-flow channel have been constructed to provide passage for fish when the river’s water level is low.

Between Hedding Street and Coleman Avenue, reinforcement in the river is concentrated in an area below the Coleman Avenue Bridge, and the river bottom includes a low-flow channel. This stretch has extensive gently sloped banks and a secondary river channel. A rock dam across the upstream end of the secondary channel helps to concentrate flows in the main river channel, thus maintaining the normal movement of sediment. The concentration of small flows also reduces solar heating of the stream water, which, if not controlled, can be lethal to fish.

The flood-control solutions in the area between Coleman Avenue and Santa Clara Street allowed the retention of as much existing SRA cover as possible, as well as preservation of the natural river channel. They feature the installation of two underground bypasses that redirect high flows around the existing riparian habitat. The first diverts water just north of the Santa Clara Street bridge. The second intercepts water south of St. John Street and parallels the Santa Clara bypass until both bypasses release the flood waters back into the main river channel south of Coleman Avenue. In addition to these bypasses, the Woz Way Bypass was constructed between Park Avenue and Woz Way.

Improvements along the east bank of the area between Santa Clara Street and Park Avenue include bank reinforcement and the addition of a series of

concrete stairs planted with riparian vegetation. The west bank treatment consists of a vertical retaining wall, which has a graphic that diagrammatically represents the entire Guadalupe River project.

Finally, on the eastern bank of the Woz Way/Highway 280 stretch of river, improvements include bank reinforcement from under the Woz Way Bridge to 50 feet downstream from the Highway 280/SR 87 interchange.

The Low-Flow Channel

The Guadalupe River supports migratory salmon runs that occur each year in rivers and streams throughout the West Coast. Migratory species in the Guadalupe include steelhead and chinook salmon, two species protected under the Federal Endangered Species Act. In order to allow these fish easy movement through the downtown flood-protection project, a low-flow channel exists within the reinforced sections of the river bottom.

The low-flow channel promotes adequate water flows for fish to pass through this area, especially during the river’s low periods. Layers of boulders and cobbles placed in the low-flow channel provide resting areas during adult fish migration, offer protection from predators, and create



1935

feeding areas for juvenile steelhead. With the low-flow channel, fish have an opportunity to move up and down the river and flows are concentrated at a depth that helps maintain cooler water temperatures.

The Urban Framework

An inviting park in the heart of the city needs adequate access and connections. Improvements to the downtown over the past few decades have brought the river in, making it an integral part of the city’s identity and a highlight of the region. The Guadalupe River Park, in turn, provides a trail system that links various parts of downtown and surrounding communities, tying into a larger system of trails in the city, county, and Bay Area.

The river and its trail system are oriented north-south, while the principal access to the Guadalupe River Park is from the east and west. These east-west connections, via streets, vehicular bridges and private pathways, facilitate the primary flow of people to the park.

Access and Circulation

East-West Connections

The Guadalupe River is the seam holding together a mix of uses on its east and west sides. Three types of east-west connections bring pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists to and across it: pedestrian bridges, streets/vehicular bridges, and pathways through private development. In addition to leading people to the park, streets and river crossings give pedestrians easy movement between commercial, recreation, and residential activities, and offer motorists several opportunities to enjoy views of the park and open space as they cross the city. Strong east-west connections across the river also support the expansion of downtown on either side, and strengthen the river as the heart of San José.

One of the unique features of the stretch of river featured in the master plan is the number of bridges. In addition to the eight vehicular bridges between Coleman Avenue and Grant Street, there are three bicycle/pedestrian bridges. One is at the Center for Performing Arts, the

second is the Children’s Bridge at Discovery Meadow, and the third is at Confluence Point over Los Gatos Creek. An additional bicycle/pedestrian bridge over the river is planned from Confluence Point to Confluence East.

As outlined in the “Design Guidelines” for development adjacent to the Guadalupe River, the city will encourage private developers to provide additional pedestrian connections to the river and to tie their plazas to Guadalupe River Park open spaces as new private development occurs. Current major east-west pedestrian connections include Taylor Street, Coleman Avenue, Julian Street, St. John Street, Santa Clara Street, San Fernando Street, Park Avenue, and San Carlos Street.



“The suddenness of a flood is very startling, and then to see the huge volume of water and how it covers a vast area so quickly...”

Virginia Holtz, Task Force Member

“The most impressive thing about the process was getting the city, county, and the water district working together with a common objective that the Guadalupe River flood control project not became another concrete channel but really a park—and their feeling strongly enough to convince the Corps to work towards that objective.”

Stan Gould, Task Force Member

“I see the Guadalupe River Park as not just a linear park, but expanding to the east and west with walkways and landscaped streets that connect to other downtown parks and prominent featres.”

Stan Gould, Task Force Member

Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul.

John Muir

Parking and Transit

Park users have several options for parking in the vicinity of the Guadalupe River. Parking opportunities can be found near the tennis courts at Confluence East, and numerous public and private lots and structures exist in close proximity to the park. Several of the private garages are required, under an agreement with the San José Redevelopment Agency, to provide parking for park users on weekends.

Multiple bus routes serve the Guadalupe River Park. In addition, the Guadalupe and Vasona light rail lines currently run near the site and another line, Downtown-East Valley, is in the planning stages.

Recreation, Trails, and Open Space

The Guadalupe River Park’s trails are more than just paved pedestrian areas. They are easily reached, accessible to all, suitable for commuting and for strolling, and they form critical links to trail systems that connect Bay Area communities, jobs, entertainment, recreation, the shoreline, and the mountains.

The trails along the Guadalupe River Park, collectively called the River Walk, are a part of the Guadalupe River Trail Corridor and one of the most distinctive features of the park. They will eventually form a continuous system of circulation, are designed to provide access to the river at various points, and generally pass under bridges to avoid at-grade street crossings. Some sections meander in close proximity to the river, while others are held to the top of the bank to avoid too much damage to the river’s ecology. There are a few locations where breaks in the trail system occur at properties developed long ago. When these properties are redeveloped, the city will seek dedication in order to provide linkages to park circulation.

Connections to other paths, such as the Los Gatos Creek Trail, and to transportation hubs, such as the Diridon Multimodal Station (CalTrain, bus, light rail, and in the future, BART), encourage use of the River Walk by commuters. As a visual bonus, the trails allow nature-viewing opportunities along much of the river.

The River Walk also ties into the Countywide Trails Master Plan system and is a link in a larger regional trail system that includes the Bay Area Ridge Trail and the San Francisco Bay Trail, a half-completed system that will eventually encircle the bay and stretch to the mountains. These systems are already extensively used for recreation, commuting to work,



Artist rendition of the park looking north towards Coleman Avenue

“Already in its unfinished state I enjoy the trails, the solitude and the natural beauty of the park. You can almost forget you’re in the middle of a teeming urban area.”

Jim Towery, Task Force Member

“We were able to take a deep breath and focus on a collaborative process and come to a design that was acceptable to everyone. It would have been easier to just throw up our hands and litigate, but that is always more expensive than collaboration.”

Larry Wilson, SCVWD Board Member

and a variety of other types of trips.

The River Walk’s trails are constructed in a manner consistent with the city’s and county’s trails master plans, sized for both pedestrians and bicycles at 12’ wide in most locations.

Proposed Pedestrian Enhancements

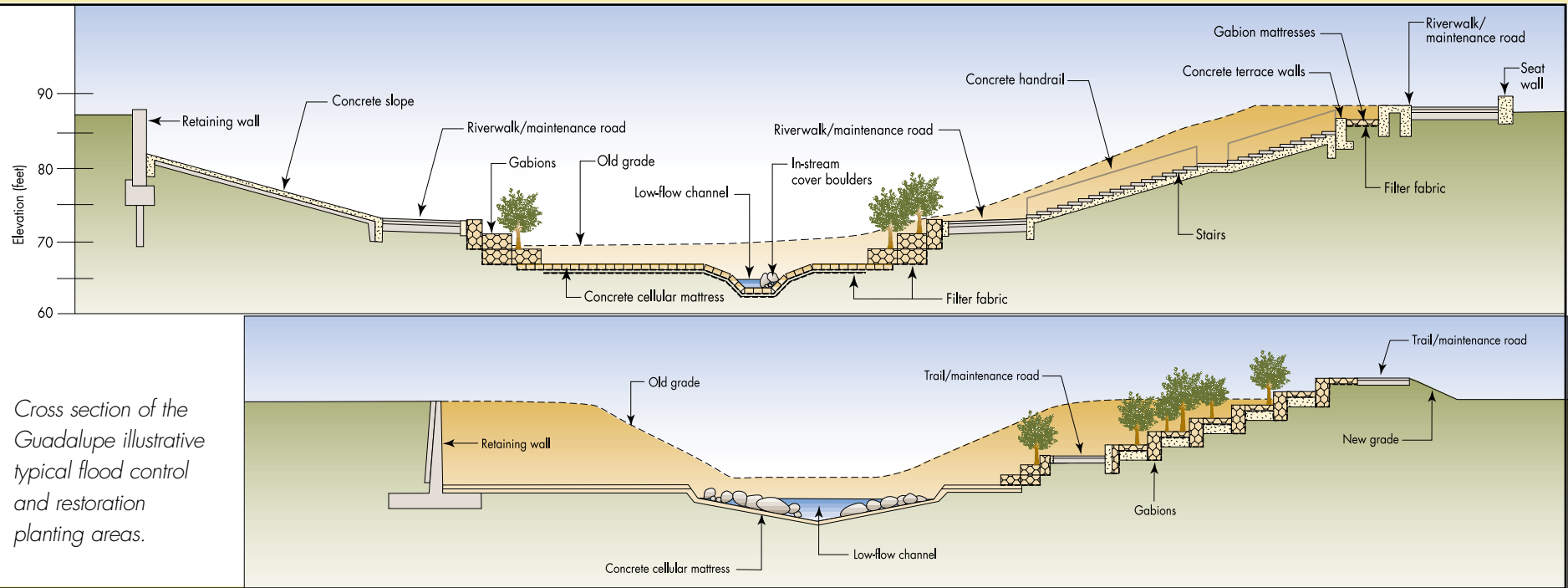
The experience of walking along the river will be enhanced by several design elements, including stairways on the east side of the river at Woz Way and San Carlos Street, a pedestrian bridge from Confluence Point to Confluence East, and an interpretive program to illustrate the cultural history, hydrology, and ecology of the river. Sister City Gardens and numerous benches for resting and observing the life of the river will also be installed along the walkways.

Visual Resources

The vegetated state and natural look of much of the Guadalupe River stand in sharp contrast to the highly urban surroundings through which the river meanders. Although visible in its full length only from high buildings or the air, the river is an important visual amenity for downtown San José, even in the small stretches one can experience in any given moment when on foot or bicycle.

Other Features

Restrooms are provided throughout the park at major activity areas, and will be included in adjacent public/private development. Lighting is designed to facilitate safe and convenient circulation of cyclists and pedestrians, providing sufficient levels for safety while minimizing glare. Site furnishings have already been used along the river, creating a standard that will be followed in future development.



“To me a lush carpet of pine needles or spongy grass is more welcome than the most luxurious Persian rug.”

Helen Keller

And an ingenious Spaniard says, that rivers and the inhabitants of the watery element were made for wise men to contemplate, and fools to pass by without consideration.

Izaak Walton



The plazas, monuments and gardens along the river give life to the park and create a series of destinations, whether someone is following the entire river downtown or just joining it for a short distance. These open spaces, each with its own character and each offering something unique, allow visitors to relax and watch the river, interact with friends or passersby, be entertained at a larger gathering, and reflect on the myriad elements that make up the city and park.

Woz Way Overlook

Located at the beginning of the flood-control system, this overlook is an interactive place for people to view floodwaters as they are intercepted by the channel, as well as providing space for reflection, respite and education. The plaza’s form is taken from the flow of the water through the box culvert, creating a series of platforms at different levels. Each platform features soft paving and tree groves with seating areas.

Discovery Meadow

Discovery Meadow sits at the southern end of the park and includes the Children’s Discovery Museum, a major cultural attraction designed by world-renowned Mexican architect Ricardo

Legorreta. The largest open space in the Guadalupe River Park after the Guadalupe Natural Reserve and Flood Plain (described at the end of the master plan), the meadow is capable of holding 20,000 people during regional festivals and other events. It features an enormous lawn and is transformed frequently into a site of celebration during the summer months. Along Discovery Meadow, the River Walk follows the river closely and is lined with comfortable park benches.



Artist rendition of the Woz Way Overlook Plaza

One of my favorite places in San José to spend family time with my kids is the Guadalupe River Park. The walking trail is so nice and quiet, the park is so clean and relaxing and so conveniently connected with the Children’s Discovery Museum and the

Light Rail system. My family has enjoyed so many fun events at this park, from the Spring in Guadalupe Gardens to Pumpkins in the Park in fall, organized by the Friends of Guadalupe River Park & Gardens. The Vietnamese Autumn Festival has

held so many successful annual celebrations here. In 1994, the Vietnamese-American Chamber of Commerce of Santa Clara Valley held its First Annual Asian American Heritage Festival with other Asian Chambers in the Guadalupe River

Park, these events introduced thousand of families in the Bay Area to this friendly park and making it a familiar place for family and community gatherings as well as a perfect place to celebrate cultural diversity. H.G. Nguyen

In addition to its lawn area, Discovery Meadow has several structures and spaces that are of interest in their own right.

Children’s Bridge

The Children’s Bridge, designed by Thomas Aidala and Mark Munoz, is a suspension bridge that provides a pedestrian crossing over the Guadalupe River approximately halfway between San Carlos Street and Woz Way. It links Discovery Meadow to major buildings—including the San José McEnery Convention Center—along Almaden Boulevard to the east. A colorful depiction of children at play anchors the west side of the bridge, and its unique cable-stayed suspension was used to give children a clear illustration of the principles of basic engineering.



AIDS Grove

The AIDS Memorial Grove was conceived as a special place for friends and families wanting to honor those who have HIV or have died from AIDS. The Chinese pistache trees were selected for the grove because they are deciduous and renew themselves every year, and because they thrive when planted in groups, where their branches can intertwine.

Ridder Plaza

Named after Tony Ridder, publisher of The San Jose Mercury News, this plaza honors his philanthropic efforts within the city. Oversized bronze running shoes symbolize the long run that he made to support and improve San José, and they further serve to give children something to aspire to, filling his shoes with their own strength, community focus, and dedication.

Parade of Animals

Artist Michael Boris created these six bronze animals dedicated to the children of San José and representing creatures that might be found along the Guadalupe River. The animals are arranged so that the owl, hawk, and fox are eyeing the rabbit and frog as food sources. The raccoon is placed as an observer, watching all the other animals.



Monopoly in the Park

Monopoly in the Park features the largest Monopoly game board in the world at 930 square feet. It is designed to be an interactive element of the park, with groups able to rent large tokens and actually play a game of Monopoly in an outdoor public setting.

Sister Cities San Jose

Sister City Gardens commemorate San José’s special relationship with particular cities throughout the world and give residents a tiny glimpse into those cultures. Several Sister City Gardens are already in place at the south end of the park. Each is similar in scale, proportion and purpose,

using plant and paving materials native to each country to express some of the country’s identity and culture. Partially enclosed, the gardens are designed to give visitors a retreat from the pressures of daily life and a window onto the river and its natural environment.

San José has sister-city relationships with seven cities: Veracruz, Mexico; San José, Costa Rica; Okayama, Japan; Dublin, Ireland; Tainan, Taiwan; Puné, India; and Ekaterinberg, Russia.

Veracruz Sister City Garden

On the east bank, under a very old California pepper tree and overlooking the river and the Children’s Discovery Museum, this homage to Veracruz, Mexico, features rust-colored Adoquin paving stone and cobblestone insets, giving the space the craftsman quality typical of Mexican gardens. The sister-city relationship was established in 1975.

San José Sister City Garden

This garden sits in the shadow of a heritage Casuarina tree and features a specimen multi-trunked Jacaranda tree and Adoquin stone from Mexico. Tiles donated by the people of San José, Costa Rica, are used on the extended seat wall. The San José, Costa Rica, relationship was established in 1962.

Okayama Sister City Garden

Okayama’s was the first of San José’s sister-city partnerships to be established, in 1957. This reflective garden sits on the east bank of the river, between the River Park Towers and the Center for Performing Arts. Academy black granite stone



interspersed with moss and fine-leaved grasses reflect the peacefulness of a Japanese garden, with a gray Sierra granite seat furthering the simple elegance. A bronze plaque tells the story of Momotaro, the Peach Boy, and a statue of Momotaro donated by the city of Okayama stands watch over the garden. The landscape includes a Japanese maple, heavenly bamboo, and mondo grass.



Dublin Sister City Garden

Looking south from the steep banks of the Guadalupe River across Discovery Meadow, this garden features a 60-foot tall illuminated flag pole flying the Dublin flag. A poet’s rock, engraved by Irish poet Arthur O’Shaughnessy, has an understory of Irish clover that appears around St. Patrick’s Day. The ground plane is covered with masonry-style cream flueri limestone paving, and a donated historic lamp post sits in the seat wall, not far from a specimen Washington thorn tree. The Dublin relationship was established in 1986.

Tainan Sister City Garden

The plantings and colors in this garden reflect Taiwan’s tropical climate. Tree of heaven and bamboo greet the visitor at the entrance, with red granite paving and varieties of tropical grasses setting the mood. This site commemorating the sister-city relationship with Tainan, Taiwan, established in 1975, also features a marble table and benches, donated by the city of Tainan.

Puné, India and Ekaterinberg, Russia

The sites for these gardens are located north of Coleman Avenue, but have not been developed as of publication of this document.

“It’s a true open-access, family-oriented public park and entertainment center.”

Antonio Estremera, SCVWD Board Member

I would defy you to find a river on this planet that prefers to run straight, unless it has been taught so by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Bay Country, Tom Horton

Chief Seattle once stated, “Humankind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves.” The Guadalupe River has woven its way through our valley for centuries. By nurturing the river and its park, we nurture the web of life and ourselves, as well. County Supervisor Blanca Alvarado, Task Force Member

It is easy to throw anything into the river, but difficult to take it out again.

Kashmiri Proverb

The Veterans Memorial

The Veterans Memorial, located on Park Avenue at the Guadalupe River, is a tribute to the men and women who have served our country in times of war and peace. The memorial, dedicated on November 11, 1997, was designed by the architectural firm Manhattan Projects in New York City, chosen through a competitive selection process conducted by the City of San José’s Public Arts Commission.



Consisting of 76 flags on 30-ft. steel poles, the memorial represents military personnel in formation, as well as recalling the tiers of white headstones in a military cemetery. The white flags represent peace and the anonymity of each who has served. The fabric snapping in the wind contrasts with the serene canopy of white banners to reflect the military strength that preserves our peace.

The etched-glass panels tell, through excerpts from letters home, the experiences of local veterans during the various wars. The figures in the panels cast shadows on the pavement.

Rivers have what man most respects and longs for in his own life and thought – a capacity for renewal and replenishment, continual energy, creativity, and cleansing.
EPA Journal, John H. Kaufmann

Center for Performing Arts Pedestrian Bridge

In order to maintain a maximum amount of the existing vegetation, this bridge was made as narrow as possible. The innovative arch post-tension design minimizes the bulk of the structure, and the use of green concrete for the bridge deck makes it appear to be floating over the river. The handrails on the east end of the bridge are decorated with intricate metal sculptures of flora and fauna found in the Guadalupe River.

The Muwekma Ohlone Tribute

The Muwekma Ohlone people, Native Americans who once lived along the Guadalupe River, are honored on the Park Avenue Bridge with animal sculptures important to their tradition. These include coyotes, hummingbirds, and an eagle. The four flags that fly above the bridge represent the past and present governments of the area: Spain, Mexico, California and the United States. The coyotes were created by artist Peter Schiffrin; the eagle and hummingbirds by Tom Andrews.



The coyote, hummingbird and eagle represent the Muwekma Ohlone creation story. Coyote was the father of the human race, responsible for creating people and teaching them how to live properly. Hummingbird was wise and clever, and the Eagle was a leader.

Park Avenue Overlook Plaza

Located on the north side of Park Avenue, the Park Avenue Overlook Plaza is situated on top of a box culvert outlet. This culvert functions as an important part of the overall flood-control effort, returning diverted flood-level water to the Guadalupe River.

Rivers are living mysteries. They link that past to the future. They inspire adventure and peace. They take us home even as they take us to new frontiers.
Peter Lourie

The plaza has a special flowing paving design and softly contoured turf and berm areas suggestive of the riverbank. Indigenous animals of the Guadalupe River are sand-blasted into the paving. The plaza also serves as an outdoor space for resting and for viewing the dramatic flood events when they occur.



McEnery Park

Named after John P. McEnery, prominent in local politics and community life in San José from the 1940s to the 1960s, this park is located on the south side of San Fernando Street, just east of the river, and was designed for children’s creative play. Older children can climb on a structure of nets and ropes,

while younger ones enjoy colorful spring toys and a model boat. A miniature re-creation of the Guadalupe River forms the central spine of the park. Starting in the mountains with mist and boulders, it flows through sandy foothills and meanders along a broad plain before disappearing into irrigated fields.

Playful dragonfly sculptures hover above the river, calling out the need for all rivers to be free of pollution. Long arcing benches follow the sinuous flow of the water, with patterned diagonal paths inviting children to count and read and measure. Picnic tables, restrooms, and lawn areas for relaxation and play offer options for everyone.

We let a river shower its banks with a spirit that invades the people living there, and we protect that river, knowing that without its blessings the people have no source of soul.
Thomas Moore

Remembering Agriculture

Remembering Agriculture, by artist Tony May, recalls the rich agricultural history that was the driving force behind San José’s economy for more than 150 years. The project recreates the distinctive shapes of those once-familiar clusters of farm buildings that are now seen less and less frequently in the Santa Clara Valley. The structures include a water tank tower, a windmill, a barn and a small shed, all of which function as arbors for ivies and other climbing plants.

Mosaic Signage Features

The rich colors and textures of the mosaic features reflect the natural forms, as well as the flora and fauna, of the river. The mosaic features are the first phase of the directional signage in the Guadalupe River Park, signage that is meant to be “discovery-based.” The color of each mosaic changes to match the palette of surrounding vegetation. No vertical sign poles are used that could detract from the beauty of the river.

Entry Mosaic

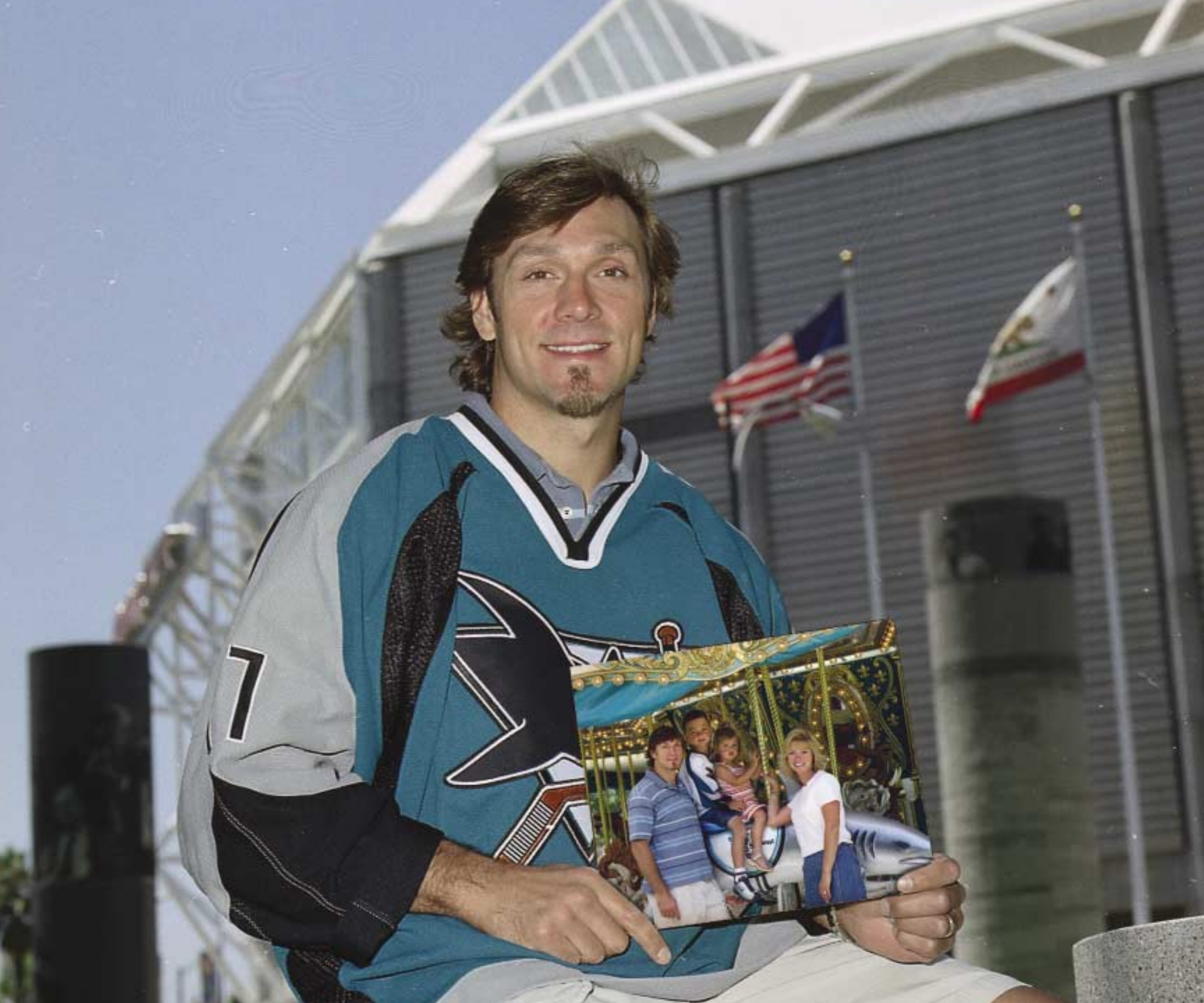
The entry signs provide pedestrians at all bridge entries to the river a welcome mat into the River Walk. Each mat has the street names on the street side of the mat, orienting visitors to the city grid.



Directional Mosaic Compass

Mosaic compasses provide directional cues to major destinations and give visitors a larger perspective of the river and its relationships to points north, south, east and west.

Rivers are magnets for the imagination, for conscious pondering and subconscious dreams, thrills, and fears. People stare into the moving water, captivated, as they are when gazing into a fire.
Tim Palmer



Arena Green is the section of the park bordered by Santa Clara Street on the south and St. John Street on the north. Features of Arena Green include the Carousel and Tot Lots, the Five Skaters Art Piece, and the Donor Walkway.



Carousel and Tot Lots
The Children’s Carousel at Arena Green includes 33 intricately painted fiberglass animals, six of which were custom-made for San José. The hummingbird, coyote, salmon and eagle represent species indigenous to the area, and two sharks celebrate the San José Sharks National Hockey League ice hockey team. Adjacent to the carousel on the west side is a brightly colored

playground for young children featuring swings, slides, a play fort, and a pyramid for climbing. To the south of the carousel, a play area for older children is composed almost entirely of nets, providing opportunities for climbing and swinging. Comfortable park benches, a refreshment kiosk and restrooms are nearby.

Five Skaters Art Piece
The Five Skaters Art Piece at Arena Green honors five Olympic champion ice skaters from the Bay Area: Peggy Fleming, Debbi Thomas, Brian Boitano, Kristy Yamaguchi, and Rudy Galindo. The piece includes five mosaic-tiled pillars, a symbolic ice rink featuring quotations from each of the skaters, time capsules displaying memorabilia from their careers, medal platforms, and a plaque listing each skater’s national and international awards.

Donor Walkway
The Donor Walkway in Arena Green, sponsored by the Friends of Guadalupe River Park Gardens, provides an opportunity for citizens to support the Guadalupe River Park by purchasing a granite paver and inscribing it with their family or company name, message or logo. The walk is lined by a double row of poplars.

Arena Green is a wonderful place where my family can enjoy the sunshine and spend an afternoon right downtown. To have a beautiful playground, comfortable park and spectacular carousel in the heart of this urban setting is a treasure. Our young

daughter is fascinated with the brightly painted, hand crafted creatures. The contrast between the large structure of the HP Pavilion at San José and the open space of the park is striking. The five Skaters Art Piece pays tribute to some of the greatest athletes

to come from the bay area. Spending an afternoon on the carousel, playing with my two children on the totlots and exploring the ecology and cultural heritage of our area at Confluence Point with my wife are favorite things to do when we are

in the Heart of Downtown San José. I’m sure that any family would find unlimited pleasure in taking time to explore this beautiful portion of the Guadalupe River. Scott Thornton, San Jose Sharks

Confluence Point

Confluence Point marks the coming together of Los Gatos Creek and the Guadalupe River, and is perhaps the most beautiful spot from which to view the confluence of these two bodies of water. This area is also celebrated as a confluence of ecology and technology and of multiple ethnicities and cultures, reflecting San José’s multi-cultural society. Braided paths and special paving materials reflect the patterns of the river’s flow. Confluence Point is the location of the Ranger Station and Visitor Center, and of an art installment honoring the Costanoan-Ohlone people.

Ranger Station and Visitor Center

The Ranger Station and Visitor Center is located on the north side of Santa Clara Street at Confluence Point. From this site, City of San José Park Rangers supervise the length of the park, providing security and interpretive programs for park visitors. The Center contains exhibits on the birds, snakes, fish, and plants native to the Guadalupe River, as well as a short introductory video that orients visitors to the park.

The Weavers’ Gifts

The sculpture *The Weavers’ Gifts* celebrates the Costanoan-Ohlone Indian peoples who lived within the area of Confluence Point. It is composed of three main elements: a large granite carving of a mortar in two halves, suggestive of a broken tradition; a large limestone carving of a traditional Ohlone gift basket, symbolizing the welcome of food and artifacts generally given to the first colonists; and a limestone representation of an unfinished spiraling storage basket inlaid in the existing park paving. Quotes from Costanoan-Ohlone people, both in English and dialect, are set into the paving, and the names of all the Costanoan-Ohlone peoples at the time of contact are inscribed on the stone seat walls.

“The Task Force saw an opportunity to do something innovative and wonderful at the children’s playgrounds at Arena Green.”

Jill Escher, Task Force Member

Confluence East

One of the larger open spaces within the Guadalupe River Park, Confluence East is comprised of multiple sites capable of hosting events of all sizes. These areas are isolated from one another geographically, allowing them to have different characters and provide different amenities. They include places of shade, refuge, and reflection, as well as large open meadows for active play such as frisbee and kite flying. The park promotes visual access to the river, and creates areas for picnics and group activities.

The Plaza areas in Confluence East celebrate the various meanings of confluence and establishes an identity for the area within the framework of the rest of Guadalupe River Park. Above all, Confluence East is designed to integrate various fractured elements, connecting the city to the river, connecting the park’s two halves across St. John Street, and relating the river to the flood-control culvert.

A number of spaces and monuments comprise Confluence East:

Tributaries Monument

Adjacent to the Santa Clara Street Overlook Plaza, this monument celebrates the confluence of the Guadalupe River and Los Gatos Creek. Designed as a circular, site-specific art piece, the monument consists of two spiraling patterns swirling into a central focal point and carrying the names of the tributaries to the two rivers. The names are carved into two bands of gray and red granite, leading to the central focus, a black granite disk. Granite seat walls edge this triangular plaza, and a group of evergreen trees provides shade and a green backdrop.

Santa Clara Street Overlook Plaza

Its pointed elliptical shape and line of benches recall the forces of a river system as it braids and flows, the ellipse being the primary form left as a

All things are connected, like the blood that runs in your family...The water’s murmur is the voice of my father’s voice.

Chief Seattle

void between two braiding river channels. This elliptical form is used throughout the Guadalupe River Park. The plaza overlooks the primary inlet for the flood-control culvert and provides space for respite and education.

St. John Street Overlook Plaza

Located adjacent to the secondary inlet for the flood-control culvert, this plaza highlights the civil engineering system that has been constructed to protect people and property in downtown San José. It also seeks to illustrate the integration of the natural river system with the flood-control system by showing how water from one is carried through the other in times of floods.

The design of the plaza consists of a narrow, trumpet-shaped space where two walks, representing the two streams and their corresponding culverts, converge into one. Graphics in the paving or on separate signage illustrate how much water is carried in each culvert. The central feature of the plaza is a triangular wedge of granite, sandwiched between the two walks, that points directly to the confluence point of the Guadalupe River and Los Gatos Creek.



Tennis Courts

Four tennis courts near the River Street Historic District offer the opportunity for active recreation in Confluence East. Aligned end-to-end, they lie along the line of the Guadalupe Parkway.

Crossing Paths Monument

This plaza celebrates the historic users of this site and is also the location where the two winding paths of Confluence East cross. Visualized best as a triangular crossword puzzle, the monument design represents the

Decades of discarded plans frustrated many of us on the Task Force, but the delay made this plan possible. It is the best combination of flood control, environmental protection and park improvements – a true jewel in the center of our city.”

Trixie Johnson, Task Force Member

intersections of different cultures on this site. Their names are written in carved granite.

Braided Path Plaza with Pool of Genes

Serving as the north entrance into Confluence East, this plaza showcases San José as a modern, multi-cultural society. Braiding concrete paths with the names of many of the ethnic groups that comprise the city’s current demographics cross each other and converge upon a reflecting pool. These paths draw users into the park from New Julian Street, while highlighting the multiethnic society they live in. The circular pool has a seat wall around it and a raised bed of river cobbles with the first names of children representing the diversity of San José.

River Street Historic District

Designated as a City of San José Historic District, the River Street Historic District possesses both historical and architectural significance. During the early 20th century, it was a working-class neighborhood that was home to one of the highest concentrations of Italian immigrants in California. It contains fine examples of both commercial and residential architecture, including Queen Anne, Italianate, Mediterranean and Salt Box styles.The River Street Historic District is adjacent to the Park and the District is not a part of the Guadalupe River Park Master Plan

Coleman Avenue Overlook Plaza

The Coleman Avenue Overlook Plaza is an important anchor to the overall park and River Walk. Located on top of two flood-control culvert outlets, the plaza offers opportunities to view the release of water back into the Guadalupe River during floods. The plaza design features the sweeping arcs found at other plazas in the park, and uses the path alignment as a defining geometry line.

I chatter, chatter as I flow to join the brimming river, for men may come and men may go, but I go on forever.

Lord Tennyson

As an educational complement to the St. John Street Overlook Plaza, Coleman Avenue Overlook Plaza features four bands in the paving. Each band represents a different flood level event, with the years of the floods engraved into the paving.

Future Park Expansion

The northwest quadrant of the intersection of the Guadalupe River and St. John Street will be the site of future park expansion. Specific uses have not yet been determined, and will be subject to future planning studies.

Guadalupe Natural Reserve and Flood Plain

Along the river, between Highway 880 and Coleman Avenue, there is a series of terraces with flowing mounds and planting that not only create a pastoral environment, but also function as a floodplain for

the river and a site for riparian habitat mitigation. This highly natural area encompasses one-third of the length of Guadalupe River Park and features gently winding paths that take pedestrians away from the pace and noise of the urban environment for a time and allow them to enjoy the peacefulness of a riverside environment with activities such as strolling and people- or wildlife-watching.

The floodplain allows water to flow through box culverts and, in high-flow events, onto the terraces, providing a natural place for the river to run without causing damage to property. The layout and planting of the terraces accommodate flood waters when needed and provide a passive recreation setting otherwise. Steps will be taken to pursue ongoing restoration activities in this area.



"We all long to be in nature, and it's hard to do that in San José, but this project allows us to enjoy nature, get away, and contemplate."
Councilmember Ken Yeager, Task Force Member

Getting to know a river is one of life's great joys.
Paul Quarrington

Guadalupe Gardens

In a separate master plan, Guadalupe Gardens is being developed as a large area of diverse public gardens for the enjoyment and education of visitors, in keeping with San José's historical image as the Garden City. The gardens sit on a 120-acre site adjacent to the Guadalupe River Park, in the area referred to as the Coleman Loop. The proposal to develop the area as public gardens grew from an opportunity to beautify a former residential area in the immediate approach zone to the Norm Y. Mineta San José International Airport.

Several elements of the Gardens are already in place, including a Heritage Rose Garden, Historic Orchard, a rock garden streetscape, and the Courtyard Garden, a demonstration recycled water garden. When fully developed, trails from the Guadalupe River Park will connect to the Gardens at several points, providing seamless access to and from the park for visitors.



"The park is part of a maturing city."
Larry Wilson, Task Force member & SCVWD Board Member



San José Heritage Rose Garden and Historic Orchard in the Guadalupe Gardens

"It completes the whole picture of San José."
Joan Corsiglia



The Guadalupe River Park is an ongoing project with the vision of a more welcoming, beautiful downtown integrally connected to its river. As the river becomes a more strongly recognized part of the city, it will play a role in economic growth and the future development of similar amenities.

Open space is a rare commodity in large cities, and the Guadalupe River Park provides a generous amount to downtown San José. Yet its protection is not guaranteed. An ongoing effort to maintain the vision that brought it to this point is needed if the park is to remain a unique and varied open space. In order to preserve the integrity of the park's design, future park development proposals should go through a rigorous screening process to ensure that they are compatible with this master plan. In general, future development of the park should be consistent with the distinctive qualities already there—the predominance of natural elements, the focus on a variety of activities that enhance the quality of life in the city, the consistent use of appropriate materials, and the absence of commercial ventures, to name a few.

Because of its size and nature, the Guadalupe River Park is a regional resource. It provides some of the amenities of neighborhood parks,

but its primary purpose is to be a draw for residents of the entire region and visitors from other corners of the world. New activities and spaces should be appropriate to the natural setting, preserving and enhancing it where possible.

The open spaces along the river, the gems in the necklace, are unique features that deserve special treatment and maintenance. They represent the ongoing development of beautiful and vibrant public spaces along the river, and, as such, will be maintained and improved or upgraded when necessary.

Policies

The above ideals are expressed in the following policies for future development in the park.

Facility and Open-space Development

To preserve the open-space character of the Guadalupe River Park, new buildings in the park are discouraged.

Any new facilities in the park should be designed to promote a variety of recreational, cultural, educational and entertainment activities that are appropriate for the regional park system and the Guadalupe River Park.

The Guadalupe River Park is a great escape for me as a student at San José State. I live close to school and as an art major, the river area gives me a diverse subject pool to draw from, no pun intended. The close proximity to the University gives me the opportunity to

jump on my bicycle with my sketch book and between classes ride down to the river edge in five minutes.

I can sketch a myriad of subjects, from business people at break or lunch, to children in the playgrounds, to sport activities in the grass field locations.

Drawing the architecture with the river vegetation in the background is a nice contrast from hard edge or soft edge.

There is also a great opportunity to draw from a large variety of birds and other animals that live along the river. You can find quiet areas with little

traffic, to relax or study and to me having a diverse recreational area so close to town is a great benefit for someone without a car. I really look forward to the continuing enhancement of the Guadalupe River Park.
Noah Klocek

New specific-use facilities such as museums or recreation centers are not part of the vision or mission of the Guadalupe River Park and should be sited elsewhere.

Construction of new restrooms, concession stands, and kiosks will follow the architectural vernacular established in Arena Green and McEnery Park.

Renovation

Existing buildings in the park that are upgraded should meet all relevant accessibility codes in a manner that is consistent with the current design of the building.

Any renovations, modifications, or replacement of existing buildings for any reason should not increase the size of the building footprint, the building’s height, or its bulk. In keeping with the park’s pedestrian orientation a traffic calming plan will be implemented on St. John Street between Autumn Street and the River Street Historic District to slow down traffic through the park.

Environmental Preservation

The riparian areas of the park are vital to the preservation of aquatic habitat and no proposals that alter those areas will be considered unless they result in habitat enhancement or expansion.

Proposals for modifications to or maintenance of the park may require review by the Adaptive Management Team to ensure that they are consistent with the requirements of the approvals for the Guadalupe River Park and Flood Control Project.

Public Art

All public art should be designed to complement the vision of the park. Proposals should be related to the river or the immediate surrounding area—it’s history, environment, and the role they play in the city. Any proposals will be subject to the City of San José’s established procedures for the development of public art, with review by the Friends of Guadalupe River Park & Gardens, the Guadalupe River Park Task Force

and other groups that have a vested interest in the park.

Circulation

Trails in the Guadalupe River Park are designed for shared use by pedestrians and bicycles. Vehicles are prohibited on the trails unless approved by the city.

No additional parking should be developed in the park. Any further parking facilities should be limited to on-street parking, lots, and garages in the vicinity of the park.

Signage

Park signage and way-finding shall be consistent with established guidelines and standards. Signage of all types—directional, informational, and interpretive—should maintain a consistent look to reflect the identity and environment of the Guadalupe River Park.

Park entrances should have adequate signage indicating park uses, regulations, and restrictions.

Lighting

Existing light levels should be maintained, and adequate lighting should be provided to ensure visitor safety. Trails should be lighted at night to allow for use by commuters, but lighting of the riparian areas should be kept to a minimum.

Operations and Maintenance

The Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services Department of the City of San José will provide the operations and maintenance of the Guadalupe River Park, working in partnership with the Santa Clara Valley Water District.

As the Guadalupe River Park evolves and future capital improvements are implemented, consideration should always be given to ensuring that these future improvements are maintained at the existing high standards of City park facilities—with the appropriate operation and maintenance strategy and the necessary budget support.

Future consideration should be given to developing a central maintenance facility for the Guadalupe River Park and Guadalupe Gardens.

Programming needs should be constantly reevaluated as use of the Guadalupe River Park increases. Event support, infrastructure improvements, and other resources must keep pace with the growth of park uses and customers.

Park Expansion

The city will pursue the acquisition of properties identified in the master plan that are now under private ownership, and will develop them for park uses.

In addition to those properties, the city will pursue other opportunities for park expansion as they arise.

Development of these newly acquired areas will conform to the park master plan’s emphasis on open space, and will provide a variety of recreational, cultural, educational, and entertainment activities that are appropriate for the regional park system and the Guadalupe River Park.

General

Visitors to the park should have access to educational information through literature, programs, tours, and exhibits.

The process of designing and implementing the new elements of the Guadalupe River Park will continue to offer citizens many opportunities to be involved in helping to shape the future of the river, the park, and downtown. Over time, use patterns will develop, changing the park’s public spaces in ways that can’t be foreseen. In spite of that, the vision for the park is that it continue to develop its regional importance to recreation and alternative transportation, and that its natural beauty, which provides critical habitat and enhances the open spaces, be preserved. In time, the Guadalupe River Park will be integral to people’s image of San Jose, much like orchards and agriculture once were to the Valley of Heart’s Delight.

**APPENDIX A
Project History**

Re-establishing the river as the center of community life in San José has been the primary guiding principle of the past several decades of work on the Guadalupe River Park Master Plan. The river is a regional resource, an open space for the convergence of recreation, events, and wildlife habitat. Native Americans had settlements along its banks as early as 2,500 years ago, and the earliest European immigrants to the area were clearly drawn to it, choosing the Guadalupe River as the location for the settlement that would become the city of San José.

The Guadalupe has also been altered at times, for different purposes. Lake Monahan, conceived in 1912 and named after Mayor Thomas P. Monahan, was created by damming the river 100 yards north of the confluence of Los Gatos Creek and the Guadalupe River. Unfortunately, those two bodies of water could not be relied upon for enough volume to feed the lake in mid-summer, so it was abandoned in 1914.

200 Years of Flooding

The Guadalupe River both attracted and repelled early residents, luring them to its edges and then pushing them away when its waters rushed into their communities. El Pueblo San José de Guadalupe, the first civil settlement established by Spain in Alta California, was founded by the Spanish on November 29, 1777. The original pueblo site was on the east side of the river, between present-day Hedding and Hobson Streets. The location in Santa Clara Valley was chosen for its temperate climate, rich soil and geographic location midway between the presidios at Monterey and San Francisco.

Farmers and the families they brought along from Mexico were the pueblo’s first settlers. Their purpose was to establish a civilian community and grow food to supply the two presidios. But floods from the Guadalupe River overran the settlement during numerous winters, forcing the pueblo to relocate to higher ground, about a mile to the south, in 1797.

On September 26, 1849, the First Constitutional Convention, meeting in

Monterey, chose San José as the first capital of the proposed new state of California. The first state legislature convened in San José in December 1849, but that winter proved to be one of the wettest ever recorded. Torrential rains and flooding, as the Guadalupe River overflowed its banks yet again, prompted the legislators to move the new state capital from San José after only one year.

Floods occurred periodically over the next century. Since the 1940s alone, the Guadalupe River has topped its banks with 14 major floods. The flood in 1955 inundated 8,300 acres, making it the largest on record, but the one in 1958 created the most extensive damage with a peak flow of 9,150 cubic feet per second (cfs). Voters in San José, recognizing the need to somehow contain the river’s highest flows, passed a \$12.75 million Santa Clara Valley Water District bond in 1963 to fund flood protection in the downtown San José area. The improvements constructed with that money included channel modifications, bank stabilization, river-bottom stabilization, and the construction of levees on certain portions of the river not covered by this current project.

More recent large floods proved that those improvements needed to be extended along a longer stretch of the river. Major events occurred in 1980, 1982, 1986, 1995 and 1997. Two floods in 1995, in January and March, caused extensive erosion damage, sediment deposition, debris accumulation, and street flooding, with an estimated discharge of 10,400 cfs (which is the highest recorded). In 1995 and 1997, President Clinton declared the region a natural disaster area.

Flood Control or Park?

When floods in the 1980s illustrated the need for more wide-ranging flood control measures, the city turned to the federal government for assistance. Congress authorized flood protection for the Guadalupe River in 1986 as part of its Water Resources Development Act. In 1990 and 1991, additional environmental protection and recreation features were added to those measures, marking the beginnings of the project as it has been constructed. Over the past few decades, two parallel planning processes merged into

one unique approach to both containing flooding and celebrating the presence of a river in the downtown. The first process, flood control, was focused on keeping the river from inundating its surroundings. The second process looked at how the natural beauty of the river could be enjoyed firsthand by everyone, a park in the heart of the most urban part of the city.

Until the late-1960s, the city was in a growth and expansion mode that neglected thought about the condition of the Guadalupe River. This changed when the city began looking at ways to develop the river into an urban amenity that drew people to its banks. Between the 1960s and 1980s, four master plans were developed that gradually expanded their scope from just urban design to park design within a flood-control project.

The two plans prepared in the 1960s and 70s dealt only with urban design elements along the river between Highway 280 and Julian Street. With the formation of a tri-party agreement in early 1983, the idea of combining flood-control measures and park design began in earnest, if not officially. The agreement among the City of San Jose, County of Santa Clara and the Santa Clara Valley Water District extended what was called the Guadalupe River Park Project from Highway 280 to Highway 17 (later renamed Highway 880). The park plans developed in 1985 and 1989 looked at how flood-control measures along the entire project could be combined with the vision the city had for the river park.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers had been studying the Guadalupe River’s flooding problems on and off since 1941. The Corps’ flood-control studies were interrupted several times by shifts in priorities at the federal level, but accelerated when the early- and mid-1980s flooding caused enough damage to prompt action.

In early 1983 the members of the tri-party consortium formed the Guadalupe River Park Task Force to oversee the master planning and implementation of this unique combination flood-control/park project. By the end of that year, the Task Force had selected a landscape architectural firm to design the Guadalupe River Park Master Plan, focusing on public access to the 2.6-mile stretch of river in the downtown. That plan,

published in 1985, sought to capitalize on the river’s aesthetic, recreational and historic values in the context of contemporary redevelopment activities and flood-control measures.

Unfortunately, the project authorized by Congress in 1986 initially only addressed flood protection, not open space or recreation design. The approved flood-control measures included an underground bypass conduit (the Woz Way bypass), channel widening, and lining banks and the river bottom with concrete and riprap. A wildlife mitigation plan addressed the replacement of riparian habitat lost to implementation of the flood-protection measures.

The Redevelopment Agency retained other consultants in 1989 to combine the Corps’ flood-control solutions and the city’s park elements into a unified design. However, by 1990, the two parallel planning processes for the Guadalupe River Project had still not officially joined. The Corps of Engineers was reassessing the original flood-control project, considering modifications to the riparian mitigation plan, evaluating potential impacts of the project on migrating fish, assessing hazardous materials and their disposal, and studying the impact of project area expansion on all elements of the project. At the same time, the City of San José was advocating the public use of and access to the river, an element still largely missing from the Corps’ plan.

The two processes finally merged at this point. The project authorized by Congress in 1986 and developed by the Corps included fencing portions of the river and restricting public access. However, in response to the 1989 Guadalupe River Park Plan, the Corps made further modifications to its plan, changing the design of the flood protection to be more compatible with park development and public uses. The General Design Memorandum of 1991, incorporating the design changes, the results of various studies, and all environmental documentation of the changes, became the basis for preparation of final construction plans and specifications for the Guadalupe River Project.

Construction on the Guadalupe River Project began in 1992. It was halted

in 1996 in response to concerns about the adequacy of the mitigation measures, the listing of threatened and endangered species in the project area, and the fact that four environmental organizations threatened litigation. The environmental organizations were concerned about fish runs in the concrete-lined channels and inadequacy of SRA cover.

To address those concerns, the Guadalupe River Flood Control Project Collaborative was formed in 1997. It included the City of San Jose, the Redevelopment Agency, the Natural Heritage Institute, CONCUR (environmental facilitators and mediators), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the California Department of Fish and Game, the National Marine Fisheries Service, the State Water Resources Control Board, the Santa Clara Valley Water District, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The group was able to reach a consensus on modifications to the plan that successfully resolved agency and environmental-group concerns, allowing the project to proceed. In 1998, efforts were begun to redesign portions of the flood control to avoid impact to the existing SRA cover habitat. Some design and construction activities were resumed in 1999.

Elements of the new design for the last segments of the park included an underground bypass that conveys floodwaters around important existing riparian habitat between Santa Clara Street and Coleman Avenue, expanded onsite and offsite mitigation, and refinements to recreation features. These final improvements give the downtown flood protection from a 100-year event.

Creative Responses to a Unique Idea

Since the 1960s, the City of San José and the Redevelopment Agency have hired leading landscape architecture and planning firms to help realize the vision of a vibrant downtown with the river as its heart, eventually developing the unique combination of flood control and river-park design that exists today. The design ideas have followed the progression in urban design thinking and city planning, leading to the current plan, which reflects all the practical solutions and dreams pursued up to today.

The first plan for the Guadalupe River Park was prepared in 1969.

Entitled Park of the Guadalupe and prepared by the City Planning Department and Lawrence Halprin and Associates, the plan envisioned the flavor of Copenhagen’s Tivoli Gardens, San Francisco’s Ghirardelli Square, the San Antonio River Park, and the waterways of Venice. More than just a river design, it included ideas for teen and tot centers, arts and crafts centers, specialty commercial uses, a bandstand, a movie theater, and outdoor vendor stands, among other elements.

The Halprin plan was followed in the early 1970s by the Plaza de Guadalupe Master Plan, prepared by Royston Hanamoto Beck and Abey (RHBA). Taking a slightly different tack, the RHBA plan used the goals established by the federal Model Cities Program and sought to “enhance and preserve the cultural identity of the Model Neighborhood residents through the development of a major park facility containing a Mexican-American Mercado, a cultural center, a branch library specializing in Mexican-American literature, and other commercial and recreational supporting activities.” Elements included the Mercado Complex, the Arts and Crafts Complex, and the Plaza Principal. When the federal government terminated the Model Cities Program, funding for the RHBA plan disappeared.

In the mid-seventies, the state legislature initiated the California State Tax Increment Redevelopment Program, and local citizens suggested that the city restart the Guadalupe River Park project by creating the Julian-Stockton Redevelopment Project, which included the Guadalupe River between Santa Clara Street and Coleman Avenue. The tri-party agreement established in 1983 and mentioned above gave the parties the ability to jointly participate in efforts to develop a master plan and implementation strategy for the Guadalupe River from Highway 17 to Highway 280.

The recitals to the tri-party agreement included the following:

The Guadalupe River represents a potential aesthetic, recreational, and commercial resource.

The City, County and District have established a Guadalupe River Park as a regional recreational concept.

The Guadalupe River poses a significant flood threat to the city.

The City is preparing general land-use plans for properties adjacent to the River.

The City, County and District recognize the need for a comprehensive Master Plan and implementation strategy for urban park development, redevelopment opportunities, and flood control on the Guadalupe River from Highway 17 to Highway 280.

San José’s Redevelopment Agency, as a result of being responsible for administering the Julian-Stockton Redevelopment Project, would provide the lead staff effort in development of the Guadalupe River Park Master Plan. And the City would be the entity to contract for consultants’ services for the master plan.

At this point, the landscape architectural firm EDAW was retained to prepare a new plan for the Guadalupe River Park. The EDAW plan identified six “character zones” along the river, recognizing their natural character, flood control limitations, development potential, public-access potential, and park use. The plan’s intention was to integrate the entire 2.6 miles of the river in the downtown by creating a spatial character common to each zone and extending it throughout the park. Recognizing the historic value and cultural imperative of “returning to the water,” the plan sought to maintain and enhance the river’s aesthetic, recreational and historic values in the context of contemporary redevelopment activities and flood-control measures. While this plan won an American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) Northern California Chapter Award for Design Excellence in 1985, it fell victim to the disconnect between the Corps’ design of major flood-control features along the river and the city’s hope of inviting people to the water’s edge.

A fourth master plan was produced in 1989 by Hargreaves Associates, bringing the flood-control and park-design elements into a cohesive

whole, and envisioning the park as a unique place for people to feel part of a natural system. It promoted the respite provided by the river’s water, wildlife, and vegetation in the center of downtown activity. In addition, the plan recognized the Corps’ flood-protection efforts and incorporated them into the design of plazas, parks and terraces.

This plan lined the channels with concrete terraces and stones wrapped in metal cages (gabions) instead of riprap, and used concrete cellular mattresses (concrete blocks laid in an interlocking pattern and secured with a cable) along the channel bottom, enabling plant material to establish itself there. Downstream of Coleman Avenue, the landscape was redesigned to include wide terraces of plantings, pathways, and benches in the flood zone. For the anadromous fish population, flow velocity was designed to remain low to protect their passage. It was this plan that was the basis for the construction documents prepared for most of the river park; it was also this plan that was stopped in 1996 due to concerns about the inadequacy of the mitigation measures, fish runs in the concrete-lined channels, and inadequacy of SRA cover.

Sasaki Associates was retained in the fall of 1998 to look at areas affected by the changes that had taken place in the design of flood-control features between Park and Coleman Avenues. Initially focusing on the park area between Santa Clara Street and Julian Street, Sasaki developed preliminary alternative concepts for Confluence East, the River Street Historic District, west bank development, and a park road. After a delay necessitated by the decision on a bypass concept, the consultant team resumed its task, designing trails and intake and outlet structures for the flood-control bypass, and preparing design alternatives mitigating the impact of the bypass openings. Their work was limited to those tasks, and did not include an update of the 1989 plan.

The plan presented here, by Royston Hanamoto Alley & Abey (RHAA), builds on the Sasaki plan for the Guadalupe River Park for the area between Santa Clara Street and Coleman Avenue. This latest revision of the Guadalupe River Park Master Plan brings the design process up to

date, responding to the changes in the flood-protection design that have taken place since construction was halted in 1996 and the resulting changes in the overall master plan. It brings closure to a design and planning process that has evolved over four decades into the distinctive Guadalupe River Park.

A History of Collaboration

The planning and design process has included, from the beginning, a number of local, state and federal agencies, private consultants, environmental groups, and significant participation from the local community. While funding came from Congress and initial flood-protection design efforts were generated by the Corps of Engineers, the City of San José and the Redevelopment Agency have hired private consultants to perform various aspects of the park design and planning, and the SCVWD has been an ongoing sponsor.

Several volunteer committees have been integral to the process. The precursor to the current Guadalupe River Task Force was formed in 1983, and was responsible for overseeing the master planning and implementation of the Guadalupe River Park. In 1999, it was reconvened with an expanded membership.

The Technical Committee was formed in 1983 to look at park and recreational activities, development opportunities, and flood control. It included representatives of the City of San José, the Santa Clara Valley Water District, County of Santa Clara, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, California Department of Transportation and the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers.

In 1997, the Guadalupe River Flood Control Project Collaborative convened to forge a compromise agreement that addressed environmental and flood-control concerns. The current design of the stretch from Coleman Avenue to Santa Clara Street, a bypass that allows the existing channel to remain as natural as possible and limits public access to the sensitive portions of the river, is a result of the Collaborative’s work.

The following agencies provided representatives to the Collaborative :

- City of San José
- San Jose Redevelopment Agency
- Santa Clara Valley Water District
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- National Marine Fisheries Service
- California Water Resources Control Board
- California Department of Fish and Game
- San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board
- Guadalupe-Coyote Resource Conservation District
- Pacific Coast Federation of Fisherman’s Associations
- Trout Unlimited (represented by the Natural Heritage Institute)

Involvement by all these agencies, committees, and individuals has been instrumental in developing approaches that meet the flood control, recreational and environmental objectives of the project, and in refining or revising them through a community-involvement process when necessary.

Community Involvement

The community has participated in all the major planning efforts since the 1960s. Public involvement has ranged from initiating ideas to attendance at public meetings to opportunities to comment on all phases of the project and the environmental documentation (feasibility reports,

Environmental Impact Reports, and Environmental Assessments) to participation on the Technical Committee and Task Force. Many community members have served 5-15 years on these committees, lending their expertise and vision to making the park a reality.

Friends of Guadalupe River Park & Gardens

The Friends of Guadalupe River Park Gardens has provided tremendous assistance in realizing the Guadalupe River Park Master Plan. Formed in 1995 as the merger of two non-profit organizations (Friends of the Guadalupe River and the Guadalupe Gardens Corporation) the Friends of Guadalupe River Park & Gardens’ mission is to provide community leadership for the development and active use of the park through education, advocacy and stewardship.

In addition to providing a citizen perspective on development issues, the organization promotes awareness and community participation through educational and outreach programs, family events, and volunteer opportunities. Working in partnership with the City of San José, it is ensuring the long-term maintenance, security and active use of the park for all citizens in the decades to come.

Adaptive Management

An Adaptive Management Team has been formed to advise the Santa Clara Valley Water District on how to maintain the river environment. The team will monitor the agreement developed by the Guadalupe River Flood Control Project Collaborative, set guidelines for evaluation, and make changes to the river design, if necessary. Issues the team will address include sedimentation, flood control, SRA vegetative cover, water temperature, and invasive species of flora and fauna, among others.

The Friends of Guadalupe River Park & Gardens and Adaptive Management Team will continue in their roles for the long term; however, the Guadalupe River Park Technical Committee and the Guadalupe River Park Task Force, both ad hoc groups, will be disbanded at the end of the current project.

anadromous fish – fish that are born in freshwater, migrate to the ocean to mature, and return to freshwater to spawn. Anadromous fish in the Guadalupe River include chinook salmon, steelhead/rainbow trout, and Pacific lamprey.

concrete cellular mattress – concrete blocks laid in an interlocking pattern and secured with a cable.

cubic foot per second (cfs) – the number of cubic feet of water—a cubic foot being a volume one foot each in height, width, and depth—that passes by a single point in a second.

culvert – a drain or channel crossing under a road or sidewalk

low-flow channel – a channel constructed at the bottom of a river to ensure water for fish passage when the river’s water level is low.

resident species – fish that live their entire lives in freshwater. In the Guadalupe River, native resident species include the Sacramento sucker, hitch, California roach, riffle sculpin, and prickly sculpin.

riparian – of or pertaining to the bank of a river or other body of water. Riparian vegetation is vegetation that grows near bodies of water and needs the moist soil those bodies of water provide.

riprap – large stones stacked to reinforce riverbanks and water edges.

shaded riverine aquatic cover (SRA) – an important component of fish habitat comprised of overhead and in-stream plant material. Overhead cover provides critical shade and contributes leaf litter and insects to the waterway with its overhanging vegetation. In-stream cover includes submerged woody debris such as roots, branches, and trunks, as well as aquatic plants, gravel or cobble layers along the streambed, and banks that are carved out and provide shelter.

vegetation along the river – cottonwood, willow, box elder, black walnut, and sycamore comprise the native tree species along the river. Several non-native species have also gained a foothold, including blue gum eucalyptus, elm, and black locust. Woody shrubs and groundcovers in the layers below the trees include elderberry, coyote brush, and Himalayan blackberry.

wildlife species along the river – mammals seen along the river include raccoon, fox squirrel, Virginia opossum, feral cat, Trowbridge shrew, broad-footed mole, and Botta’s pocket gopher. While few amphibians or reptiles survive along urban streams, the Pacific treefrog, western toad, and bullfrog can be found within the project boundaries. The park hosts bird species including mourning dove, belted kingfisher, yellow warbler, California towhee, black phoebe, lesser goldfinch, California quail, red-tailed hawk, red-shouldered hawk, yellow-rumped warbler, and ruby-crowned kinglet.

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This project has had many contributors who have been previously involved in the project. The following list is just a small portion of the many people who worked so long to make the park a reality.

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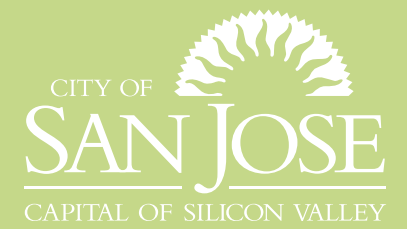
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